

University of Groningen

Editorial

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Published in:
Incontri. Rivista europea di studi italiani

DOI:
[10.18352/incontri.10213](https://doi.org/10.18352/incontri.10213)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2017

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

de Jong, J. (2017). Editorial: Incontri. Rivista europea di studi italiani. *Incontri. Rivista europea di studi italiani*, 32(2), 5-7. <https://doi.org/10.18352/incontri.10213>

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Editorial

Jan L. de Jong

The three papers published in this issue of *Incontri* were presented as lectures during a symposium of the section Italian Art Studies of the Onderzoekschool Kunstgeschiedenis (OSK; Dutch Postgraduate School for Art History) in Utrecht, on May 21, 2017. The theme of the symposium was ‘Tombs and Cenotaphs in Italy, 1300-1900’. All three lectures discuss one or more tombs that were made in Rome, in the period between ca. 1480-1575. Furthermore, they all examine ‘clerical tombs’, made for popes and cardinals.

During the Roman Renaissance, the specific wishes for a ‘clerical tomb’ were wide ranging. On the one hand there were cardinals like Gabriele Rangone da Verona († September 27, 1486) who was laid to rest in S. Maria in Aracoeli, in the fourth chapel of the right aisle. The cardinal had personally paid for the construction of this chapel, but wished his grave to be *sine ulla memoria* (without any memorial).¹ On the other end of the spectrum were cardinals like Francesco Armellini († 1527 or 1528), who certainly wanted his tomb to be seen. He was buried in a huge wall monument in S. Maria in Trastevere, that he had had constructed for himself and his father, three years before he died.²

These two extremes immediately make it clear that a tomb was generally more than just a place to be buried. (The case of cardinal Gabriele Rangone was exceptional, though not unique).³ The wide range of variations raises the question: what was actually the function of a tomb, other than a final resting place? A tomb was also a place to remember the deceased and pray for them. Accordingly, Sebastiano Medici wrote in his *Treatise on Tombs* from 1580: ‘... looking at tombs, we retain the memory of those (who have died), and pray for them, and offer other

¹ P.F. Casimiro: *Memorie storiche della Chiesa e convento di S. Maria in Araceli di Roma raccolte da P.F. Casimiro Romano, dell'ordine de' Minori*, Roma, Rocca Bernabò, 1736, p. 348: ‘... fu sepolto senza alcuna memoria nella cappella di s. Bonaventura, al presente detta del crocifisso, da esso interamente fabbricata.’ Originally this chapel was the third one of the right aisle, but in the sixteenth century the second chapel was split into two new chapels. On Cardinal Rangone’s chapel, see R. Cobianchi, ‘Gabriele Rangone (d. 1486). The first Observant Franciscan cardinal and his chapel in Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome’, in: M. Hollingsworth & C. M. Richardson (eds.), *The possessions of a Cardinal*, University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009, pp. 61-76, esp. 66-72.

² J. Götzmann, *Römische Grabmäler der Hochrenaissance. Typologie, Ikonographie, Stil* (Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance, 13), Münster, Rhema-Verlag, 2010, pp. 151-189. The tomb is situated the end of the right aisle, close to the choir.

³ Two other examples are Cardinal Latino Orsini († August 11, 1477) and Cardinal Ludovico Simoneta († April 30, 1568). See Alphonsus Ciaconius (Alfonso Chacon), *Vitae et res gestae Pontificum romanorum et S.R.E. Cardinalium : ab initio nascentis Ecclesiae vsque ad Clementem IX P.O.M.*, Roma, Philippus et Antonius de Rubeis, 1677, II, col. 971, regarding Cardinal Orsini: ‘... corpus sepultum in Ecclesia S. Salvatoris de Lauro a se fundata sub Altari B. Virgini Mariae sacro, sine ulla sepulchrali inscriptione, ut ipse in supremis tabulis expresse mandaverat’, and III, col. 924, regarding Cardinal Simonetta: ‘... sepultus ad S. Mariam Angelorum in Thermis sine ulla sepulchrali inscriptione’.

intercessions'.⁴ A third function of a tomb was to house the dead body until the day of the resurrection, making sure it would rest in a very specific place and perhaps implying that on the final day it would be raised from the dead right there. Thus Cardinal Raimond Mairose (also spelled Mairosio, † October 21, 1427) had the memorial slab on his grave in the floor of S. Prassede (no longer extant) not only inscribed with the request to pray for his soul ('Pray for me, brothers'), but also with a verse of *Psalms* 131 (132), 14: 'This is my rest for ever and ever: here will I dwell, for I have chosen it'.⁵ A fourth function was to serve as a place of memory and reflection on matters of life and death. That tombs did indeed fulfill this purpose appears from the collections of epitaphs that steadily appeared in print from the 1590's on.⁶ Readers would peruse grave inscriptions from different times and countries, and become acquainted with varying thoughts and feelings about death and life. Thus they were stirred to ponder on such issues as preparation for the inevitable final moment, the confrontation with their Creator and Judge, when 'in their flesh they shall see God',⁷ and the afterlife. Over the course of the centuries these printed collections even sorted the epitaphs according to various criteria. Thus Pietro Luigi Galletti's three volumes of inscriptions in Rome, from 1760, is subdivided into various *classes* such as epitaphs of popes, of cardinals, of bishops, but also of fathers, of mothers, of people with various professions, and so on.⁸ A fifth function of tombs was to inspire the viewers with a desire of imitation of the good example of the deceased, whose virtuous deeds and recommendable character were emphatically praised. Accordingly, Cardinal Francesco Abbondio Castiglioni († November 14, 1568) stated in his testament, eight days before his death, that he wanted to be buried in a tomb in S. Maria del Popolo, 'not for any pomp or vainglory, but to arouse future generations to virtuousness through his example, and that reminded by his aspect they would pray to God for his soul'.⁹

As will appear from the three papers published here, these various functions are not all there is to be said about Renaissance tombs in Rome. Some important issues to consider when studying grave monuments are such questions as the degree to which the particular wishes of the deceased were respected; the audience that was primarily addressed; and the personal contribution of the artist making the tomb, beyond the loyal implementation of the commissioners' wishes. These are, of course, only a few of the many issues to address. A number of them are briefly reviewed in the first paper, by Jan de Jong, serving as an outline of the present state of research of Renaissance tombs in Rome. The real issue of De Jong's contribution, however, is the gap between the wishes of how a (prominent) person wanted his tomb to look, and how survivors did only partially or not at all respect these wishes, thus (re)shaping the memory of the deceased for their own specific (propagandistic) purposes. The contribution by Lotte van ter Toolen focusses on tomb monuments that

⁴ S. Medici, *Tractatus de sepulturis, & opuscula septem*, Firenze, Bartolomeo Sermartelli, 1580, p. 2: '... nam sepulcra insipientes eorum (sc. defunctorum) memoriam retinemus, & pro eis oramus, & alia offerimus suffragia.'

⁵ V. Forcella, *Inscrizioni delle chiese e d'altri edifici di Roma dal secolo XI fino ai giorni nostri*, Roma, Fratelli Bencini, 1869-84, II, p. 500, nr. 1507: 'Orate pro me fratres' and 'Haec est re | quies mea usque in finem saeculi. Hic | habitabo quoniam elegi eam.'

⁶ Two early examples are Laurentius Schraderus (Lorenz Schrader), *Monumentorum Italiae, quae hoc nostro saeculo & à Christianis posita sunt, libri quator*, Helmstedt, Jakob Lucius, 1592, and Nathan Chytraeus (Nathan Kochhaff or Kochhaffe), *Variorum in Europa itinerum deliciae*, Herborn, Christoph Rab (Corvinus), 1594.

⁷ Job 19: 26.

⁸ P.L. Galletti, *Inscriptiones romanae infimi aevi Romae exstantes*, Rome, Generoso Salomoni, 1760

⁹ '... voluit per heredem suum sibi erigi depositum non ad pompam ullam neque ad inanem gloriam sed ad excitandos posteros suos exemplo suo ad virtutem, et ut aspectu moniti, orent deum pro anima sua ...'. Quoted after: E. Bentivoglio & S. Valtieri, *S. Maria del Popolo*, Roma, Bardi, 1976, p. 172.

house two bodies, even though an effigy of just one person makes it seem as if it is the burial place of a single individual. Only an attentive reading of the epitaph tells that it is a 'double' instead of a 'single' tomb. In the case of the tomb monument of the brother-cardinals Della Rovere, in S. Maria del Popolo, this has led to an ingenious play of words and images, which demands knowledge of the works of antique poets like Ovid to be fully understood. It raises questions about the audience that was primarily addressed and the message that was conveyed. The third contribution, by Maria Forcellino, also touches on the issue of the particular wishes of the deceased (as far as they were known and clearly specified) versus the changes wrought by surviving relatives and others. Her main point, however, is the question how Michelangelo put his personal stamp on the final version of the tomb monument of Pope Julius II. The effigy of the Pope, she finds, characterizes Julius II more as a 'Penitent Pope' than as the 'Warrior Pope' he historically was. This, she concludes, can be explained as a reflection of Michelangelo's religious attitude and his spiritual belief in the final period of his life.

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